and cost-effective manner and to prevent any leakages, Ministry of Petroleum has proposed introduction of Smart Card System for distribution of PDS kerosene. The scheme is proposed to be introduced initially on an experimental basis. In the Pilot project, subsidized kerosene through Smart Card is proposed to be available to BPL families while all other ration card holders would be given non-subsidized kerosene.

(d) Does not arise.

Strengthening role and efficiency of PDS

57. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal to strengthen role and efficiency of Public Distribution System (PDS); and

(b) whether Government is also considering any proposal to universalize access to Public Distribution System?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) TPDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Government of India and State/UT Governments. The Government of India carries out procurement of foodgrains for the TPDS, their storage, transportation and allocation to the State/UT Governments. The responsibilities for allocation foodgrains within a State/UT, identification of eligible BPL and AAY families based on estimates of Planning Commission and issuance of ration cards to them, and supervision of distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible ration card holders through the fair price shops rest with the respective State/UT Governments.

Government has been continuously taking steps to strengthen the TPDS by improving its efficiency. Government got evaluated the TPDS by PEO (Planning Commission) and ORG MARG.. Certain shortcomings were pointed out in their evaluation reports received in 2005. In view of these reports, to strengthen the TPDS and to curb leakages and diversion of foodgrains meant for TPDS, in consultation with State and UT Governments, the Government evolved a 9-point Action Plan in 2006. This includes measures such as review of BPL and AAY lists for exclusion of ineligible families and inclusion of eligible families, ensuring leakage free distribution by taking penal action against those found indulging in malpractices, involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions in functioning of FPS, display of BPL and AAY lists at fair price shops, door step delivery of PDS commodities to fair price shops, etc. The Action Plan is under implementation in States and UTs since July, 2006 and is being closely monitored by FPS level Vigilance Committees.

The Government has taken various other measures to improve functioning of the TPDS. A Revised Citizen's Charter has been issued and is being implemented since July, 2007. Monthly certification of delivery of allocated foodgrains to FPS and their distribution to ration card holders

has been introduced from April, 2008. Training programmes for TPDS functionaries and awareness campaign for TPDS beneficiaries are being taken up. Computerization of TPDS operations has been initiated. Use of new technologies such as Global Positioning System to monitor movement of foodgrains under TPDS has been undertaken on a pilot basis. Policy guidelines have also been issued on distribution of wheat flour under the TPDS, so that the poor families are benefited. For increasing awareness on TPDS, publicity-cum-awareness campaign is also being taken up.

(b) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government.

Revision of PDS policy

58. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that a large number of bogus ration cards issued by State Governments have affected adversely the Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country;

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether the items which are supplied to States under PDS are mostly diverted in the open market;

(d) if so, whether in view of bogus ration cards and corruption in PDS items, Government proposes to revise the PDS policy; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (e) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Government of India and State/UT Governments. The Government of India carries out procurement of foodgrains for the TPDS, their storage, transportation and allocation to the State/UT Governments. The responsibility for allocation of foodgrains within a State/UT, identification of eligible families and issuance of ration cards to them, and supervision of distribution of allocated foodgrains to eligible families through a vast network of 4.96 lakh fair price shops rest with the respective State/UT Governments. At present, 23.66 crore APL/BPL/AAY cards have been issued by the State/UT Governments.

Government has been continuously taking steps to strengthen the TPDS by improving its efficiency. Government got evaluated the TPDS by PEO (Planning Commission) and ORG MARG. Certain shortcomings were pointed out in their evaluation reports received in 2005. In view of these reports, to strengthen the TPDS and to curb leakages and diversion of foodgrains meant for TPDS, in consultation with State and UT Governments, the Government evolved a